

Utah Department of Health
Department of Agriculture and Food
Division of Natural Resources
Utah's 12 Local Health Departments
Utah Association of Mosquito
Abatement and local districts.



News Release

For Immediate Release:
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West Nile Virus Detected in Utah

(Salt Lake City, UT) – Utah public health officials report West Nile virus (WNV) has been detected in mosquitoes in Grand County and in Washington County. Additionally, two Utah residents, one from Box Elder County, and one from Salt Lake County have been diagnosed with WNV.

Local mosquito abatement districts have been trapping mosquitoes for WNV detection since May. This week, WNV was detected in one batch of mosquitoes from Grand County and two batches of mosquitoes from Washington County. This marks the first detection of WNV in Utah this year. The detection of WNV in mosquitoes is not surprising. There has been significant WNV activity in the Grand Junction area of Colorado, as well as in Arizona and Nevada.

The Box Elder resident, who is between the age of 45 and 64, is the first Utahn reported with WNV this year. During the incubation period for this disease, the resident traveled to Arizona. Public health officials cannot determine whether this individual was infected during travel to Arizona or while in Utah. The public health system has just received a report about the Salt Lake County resident and an investigation is being conducted to learn about possible exposure.

In 2003, West Nile virus was detected in mosquitoes, horses, chickens, birds, and two human in eight Utah counties including Carbon, Duchesne, Emery, Grand, Sanpete, Uintah, Utah, and Wayne. West Nile is transmitted to both humans and horses by mosquitoes.

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Most people who are infected with West Nile virus do not show any symptoms. Some (about 1 in 5) have flu-like symptoms with fever, muscle aches, and possibly a rash. Fewer still (about 1 in 150) develop more severe illness affecting the brain and spinal cord. They may have symptoms such as headache, paralysis, and stiff neck. The risk of severe illness increases with age, but there is no age at which there is no risk of illness.

As of July 27, the Centers for Disease Control reported 256 cases of WNV in the United States, with 6 deaths. This year, Arizona has the highest number of cases with 161 of the cases.

The Utah Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture and Food, along with local health departments, local mosquito abatement districts, and the Division of Wildlife Resources are all collaborating in the tracking and monitoring of West Nile virus in Utah. In affected areas, local mosquito abatement district workers are increasing their efforts to reduce the number of mosquitoes that can spread the disease.

For more information, call your local health department or 1-888-222-2542.

For up to date information on the spread of West Nile virus in Utah, please visit

www.health.utah.gov/wnv

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.